Family Planning Insurance Scheme

1046. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government takes a long time to settle claims pertaining to the Family Planning Insurance Scheme;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) how many claims have been settled during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a), (b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Negative inflation and rise in prices of essential goods

1047. MS. KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite overall low/negative inflation, the prices of essential commodities have gone up substantially over the past one year;

(b) if so, the rate of increase in prices of cereals, pulses, salt, fruits and vegetables during the past one year;

(c) the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to protect the poor and the economically weak from such high prices of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The year-on-year inflation measured by the wholesale price index (WPI) was negative at 1.4 per cent in June, 2009. Month wise inflation (in per cent) for select essential commodities since June, 2008 is indicated in table 1 below:

	All-Comm.	Cereals	Pulses	Vegetables	Fruits	Salt
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Weight (%)	100.00	4.41	0.60	1.46	1.46	0.02
Jun-08	11.82	7.17	-1.30	1.82	5.62	6.01
Jul-08	12.36	7.41	1.44	-4.90	11.91	6.20
Aug-08	12.82	6.49	6.56	-8.52	21.05	10.49
Sep-08	12.27	6.38	8.51	-2.66	16.42	24.85
Oct-08	11.06	8.80	8.88	12.75	15.79	26.75
Nov-08	8.48	9.21	10.99	24.35	14.10	21.68
Dec-08	6.19	10.53	12.59	7.65	15.91	24.32

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Jan-09	4.90	10.89	13.57	15.36	18.63	11.79
Feb-09	3.50	12.66	16.83	6.55	11.62	10.81
Mar-09	1.20	11.72	10.83	-5.27	7.58	10.82
Apr-09	1.31	11.59	13.68	16.40	5.47	14.41
May-09	0.43	12.40	14.89	18.84	-0.18	11.18
Jun-09	-1.39	12.84	16.81	20.21	0.83	19.95

(c) The sharp decline in the overall inflation rate in 2009 stemmed from a major decline in the fuel group and a lesser decline in the group of manufactured products, accruing from a high statistical base in the corresponding period in 2008. Despite this decline, inflation in essential commodities continues to remain high, on account of lower agricultural production in some crops, increase in the minimum support prices and growth in demand.

(d) The Government monitors the price situation regularly, with price stability being high on its agenda. Measures taken to contain prices of essential commodities include selective ban on exports and futures trading in food grains, zero import duty on select food items, permitting imports of pulses and sugar by public sector undertakings, distribution of imported pulses and edible oils through the PDS and release of higher quota of non-levy sugar.

Protection from economic meltdown

1048. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:
SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking any steps and mechanisms that protect developing countries from the impact of the economic meltdown and ensure that the projected slower growth rates do not lead to reduced allocation for the social sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this direction so far; and

(c) the funds being allocated for the social sector meant for use of minorities in the country, especially in Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (d) The Government has been monitoring and evaluating the effect of global economic developments on the Indian economy, in formulating its economic policies. Fiscal stimulus packages have been provided by the Government, from time to time, to address the adverse impact of global meltdown, on the domestic economy. The fiscal measures, *inter-alia*, include increased plan expenditures, reduction in indirect taxes and sector specific measures. These measures have been supplemented by monetary measures taken by the Reserve Bank of India.